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Russia Expels U. S. Tourist

Fifth Spy Charge Since U-2 Case

MOSCOW, Aug. 11 (AP).—

The Soviet Union told the United States Embassy today that an American tourist identified only as Robert Christner has been expelled from the Soviet Union as a spy.

The embassy said it knew nothing about Christner and first heard of him in the note delivered from the Soviet Foreign Ministry this morning.

The note charged he had been sent to the Soviet Union in July to collect industrial and military intelligence. The Russians did not say when the expulsion took place.

At Library of Congress

(The name of Robert Charles Christner turned up in passport office files. He is 27 and a native of San Antonio, Tex. He listed his residence and that of his mother as Sparks, Nev. On his passport application he said he intended to visit France, Hungary and the Soviet Union.

In Sparks, Mr. Christner's mother, Mrs. Nellie Theum, and sister, Reeda Christner, said he was traveling on an education grant. Earlier he worked in the Library of Congress. He speaks Russian fluently. His mother and sister said his one-month visit in Russia was approaching an end when his expulsion was announced. They said they did not know where he is now.)

Tass, the official Soviet news



COL. EDWIN M. KIRTON
—AP Wirephoto

CAPT. IRVING T.
McDONALD
—AP Wirephoto

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agency, said the foreign ministry had warned the embassy against "exploiting tourists for intelligence purposes."

It was the fifth case of American spying charged by the Russians since the downing of Francis Gary Powers' U-2 plane May 1, and the second expulsion of an American citizen to be announced in as many days.

Col. Edwin M. Kirton, 50, the United States air attache in Moscow, was ordered to leave the Soviet Union yesterday. He was accused of organizing a spy apparatus and of photographing military installations. His assistant, Capt. Irving T. McDonald, Jr., 34, of Provincetown, Mass., was accused of similar activities but was not ordered out of the country. United States Charge d'Affaires Edward L. Freers rejected the charges.

Map Making Charged

A Tass statement said:

"State security organizations have established that during his trips in the Soviet Union, Christner drew topographical maps of various areas, marking on them railways, bridges and radio aeriels.

"He also photographed certain objects.

"He engaged in these activities in Uzhgorod, Lvov, Kiev, Baku and elsewhere. In Baku, for instance, he photographed warships in the bay.

"Christner kept his intelligence notes and films in a specially designed belt which he wore under his clothing. He speaks good Russian which he learned in a military school."

Col. Kirton, a husky, 6-foot-5 career officer from Palo Alto, Calif., said: "It's a surprise to me, I tried to conduct myself properly."

Capt. McDonald, who was awarded the Legion of Merit in 1956 for outstanding duty with the National Security Agency, still has a year to go on his Moscow tour of duty. Col. Kirton's two-year assignment would have ended in October.

Col. Kirton plans to head home via Copenhagen Monday with his wife Lira, who returned only yesterday from a brief shopping trip to Western Europe.

"I never thought this was what I was coming back for," Mrs. Kirton said.

Col. Kirton served two years in the Pentagon before coming here in September, 1958. Before that he was in the Strategic Air Command. His mother is Mrs. Frances M. Russell of Palo Alto.

Retaliation Expected

United States Embassy officials had expected action to be taken against some staff member to counter the American expulsion of Petr Y. Ezhov July 22.

Ezhov, 39-year-old third secretary at the Soviet Embassy in Washington, was ordered to leave the United States on the ground that he arranged for aerial photography of United States cities and military installations.

Both Col. Kirton and Capt. McDonald are fluent in Russian. They had hoped to be observers at Francis Gary Powers' espionage trial, opening in the vast Hall of Columns next Wednesday.

Col. Kirton made an expert inspection of the U-2 wreckage. He also arranged the ceremony for return to the United States of the body of Maj. William G. Palm, pilot of RB-47 shot down by the Russians in Arctic waters July 1.

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